

USE OF L1 AND TRANSLATION IN THE EFL CLASSROOM

Introduction

Firstly, the aim of the present paper is to explore some of the controversy surrounding the use of the student's first language (L1) in a monolingual EFL classroom. Secondly, it is to suggest translation activities as a way out of the long-standing disagreement between opponents and proponents of L1.

The conflict itself is taking place in academic circles rather than in classrooms, where the use of L1 is still considered unacceptable owing to the predominance of the communicative method in language teaching. Teachers are generally not familiar with relatively new methodological indications of how to use L1 in a manner which would not hinder their students' learning processes.

The ongoing academic debate, together with heated arguments for and against the use of L1, has also produced some ideas on when and how to use L1 in language teaching. Given that translation is a skill which should be taught in a monolingual EFL classroom, translation activities provide common ground where the use of L1 is legitimate, meaningful and serves a useful purpose.

Finally, in the article I present some of the translation activities proposed by various ELT professionals in order to provide working ideas for teachers of English.

1. L1 as a tool: its role and place in the process of language learning

In the history of English Language Teaching (see Howatt 1984) the use of L1 in class seems to have been in and out of fashion depending on the assumptions of the method of the moment.

Since the advent of the Communicative Approach, students' use of their mother tongue has been excluded from the EFL classroom. It is regarded as counter-productive in the process of acquiring a new language, holding students back from expressing themselves freely in L2 and thus doing more harm than good (Carreres 2006: 1).

The Communicative Approach originated in the UK in the 1970s as a response to various historical factors, but mainly as a reaction against the Grammar-Translation and Audio-Lingual Methods. The Grammar-Translation Method made a point of translating isolated sentences word for word and out of context whereas the Audio-Lingual Method relied heavily on monotonous drills and patterns. The dissatisfaction with these as ineffective and dull, among other things, led to the formulation of a new method in language teaching. Some authors (see Gabrielatos 2001 for a full discussion) argue that the monolingual approach was first used in schools in former British colonies and see it as imperialistic and oppressive to both language norms and L1 cultures. Needless to say, these views refer to countries where English had been one of the official languages. Still, I agree that “it is essential for ELT professionals to have a historical perspective of attitudes, approaches and methods which have influenced ELT decisions and practices worldwide” (Gabrielatos 2001: 6).

The Communicative Approach assumed that the use of L1 and translation should be abandoned entirely and students should be exposed to the target language all the time. L2 should be the object and the medium of instruction in order for the learning process to reflect naturalistic language acquisition. The emphasis was on the development of all four skills and achieving the aim of communication, rather than grammatical correctness and accuracy.

Although many other methods, approaches and combinations of approaches have sprung up since then, in 21st-century Europe the Communicative Approach is still the mainstream methodology. This is mainly due to our geographical and cultural closeness to the UK. Unlike teachers in some remote countries with dissimilar cultures, for example Japan, Hong Kong or Taiwan, where the Communicative Approach is not applied, European teachers are directly affected by the whole ELT industry: British speakers come to lecture at conferences and instruct non-native teachers, British publishers dominate the textbook market, and British teachers are employed in schools outside the UK.

Being the trendiest methodology in Europe, the Communicative Approach has slowly but steadily grown into a sort of prevailing ideology, leaving numbers of teachers feeling uncomfortable, ill at ease or even literally guilty of sin if they do make use of L1 in any kind of teaching situation (Buckmaster 2000, Gabrielatos 2001, Koppe and Kremer 2007, Owen 2002). It is believed that L1 in the classroom is always a bad thing. Using L1 is simply against our sense of good teaching practice, because we understand that it fails to provide for our students' likely needs and as such it is irresponsible and unprofessional. Consequently, most teachers are not willing to discuss the issue openly with their colleagues, to say nothing of their instructors or lesson observers. Sometimes even the mention of L1 is enough to bring disapproval and there is no room for unbiased discussion.

Yet, in the realms of academic research a debate on the issue of the use or non-use of L1 in today's classrooms has been going for some time. The main argument against the use of L1 in a class where all students speak the same native language

is, of course, that many teachers are struggling to get their students to speak more English and less L1 (Clanfield and Foord 2000, International Teacher Training Organisation). So instead of wasting their students' class time on L1, to which they are exposed outside the classroom all the time, teachers should focus on encouraging the use of L2. Another argument against L1 in language teaching is that students will become dependent on it, and not even try to understand meaning from context and explanation, or express what they want to say within their limited command of L2 – both of which are important skills which they will need to use when communicating in real situations (Swift 2006: 1). Uncritical use of L1 will reinforce students' tendency to rely on it.

While these arguments are true and valid, and to be kept in mind, numerous benefits of the use of L1 have also been presented. Most authors agree that L1 can be used to provide a quick and accurate translation of an English word that otherwise might take a long time for the teacher to explain without any guarantee that the explanation in English will be understood by students. L1 simply saves the time and effort of both teachers and students (Bowen a, Carreres 2006, International Teacher Training Organisation, Najduchowski 2008, Swift 2006). The greatest advantage of L1 in the classroom, however, is that the teacher can contrast it with L2 in order to show which structures are difficult (vocabulary items – false friends, words easily confused, words with no equivalents, etc.) and which are easy and need very little attention. By comparing and contrasting L1 and L2 structures we can make them more meaningful to our students and help students understand them (Bowen a, Buckmaster 2000, Najduchowski 2008, Swift 2006). L1 language and its culture are seen as a valuable resource because through their use teachers can enrich the learning process and facilitate the progress of their students towards the other tongue and the other culture (Prodromou 2002). It is also claimed that the use of L1 can be more productive than counter-productive when students' receptive competence (their understanding) is higher than their productive competence (their ability to use the language), for example in the case of reading skills courses for student doctors who have to understand medical textbooks and journals in English. Allowing them to respond using L1 is a good way of checking their receptive competence (Swift 2006). The mother tongue is also particularly effective with younger learners and adult learners at beginner level. It can be used with beginners for pre-lesson small talk to get to know the students as people, and for discussions to explain the course methodology, to check comprehension, to check instructions, to understand jokes, to check exercises with their partners and for general classroom management (Bowen a, Buckmaster 2000, Swift 2006).

Also there is mutual agreement among authors that some learners need the security of the mother tongue. We should take into account different learning styles and individual character in the classroom. There are students who simply do better in class when they know they can ask questions in L1 or get an answer in L1. Some students prefer having a mother tongue equivalent instead of constantly working things out (Bowen a). By allowing the use of L1 in specified circumstances we

might take the fear out of learning and make students less tense (Buckmaster 2000, Najduchowski 2008, Swift 2006). The less afraid our students are, the more they will be able to learn, which means satisfaction to everyone involved: the teacher and the student.

Najduchowski (2008) uses a metaphor which sums up the many aspects of L1 use in the classroom: he describes L1 as another tool which we may use to the benefit of our students along with the chalk, the whiteboard, the CD player, etc. It is a helpful and valuable tool, which does not have to be used, but can be used when necessary.

On the whole, all proponents of L1 emphasise that L1 should not be overused in the classroom. Critical teachers should know both the benefits and limitations of L1 use. They should reflect on their teaching practice and they should make principled decisions based on their awareness of language and culture, knowledge of their students' needs as well as the idiosyncrasies of their particular teaching context (Gabrielatos 2001: 9).

Amidst the ongoing debate on the use or non-use of L1, a shift in the perception of what is more natural in the process of language learning seems to be taking place. Under the Communicative Approach, the most natural activity was to acquire a language just as children do while learning their first language. For that reason, the learning process should ideally be a reflection of language acquisition and the use of L1 completely excluded. However, a new standpoint seems to be evolving that the most natural activity for language learners is to assimilate L2 information via their L1 processing. In learning English, learners do not create a separate language store of English. They are adding to their existing knowledge of language. It is inevitable that learners will make certain right or wrong suppositions about L2 based on their experience with L1 and using the latter as a resource (Buckmaster 2000, Koppe and Kremer 2007). That is why, according to Clanfield and Foord (2000: 1), any attempt to eliminate the use of the mother tongue completely from the classroom is likely to be futile and, according to Buckmaster (2000:1), it is rather perverse to pretend that none of us, whether teacher or student, knows our mother tongue. Instead we should concentrate on ways of harnessing L1; then the classroom is likely to be more authentic in the sense that it reflects the natural interplay of L1 and L2 which is inherent in second language acquisition (Clanfield and Foord 2000: 1). As Carreres (2006: 6) puts it "It is naïve and simply inaccurate to imagine that learners who only have one or two contact hours of language teaching per week can learn a language by immersion in the same way as children learn their mother tongue." In the end all language learners are natural translators because they map L2 directly on the mother tongue to short-cut the process of learning (Swan in Buckmaster 2000: 1), and they start resorting to their translation skills from the very beginning of any learning process, whether their teachers like it or not (Koppe and Kremer 2007: 3). They are also natural translators in a different sense: they have to respond to the requirements of life and function as translators in everyday situations (Duff 1989, Weigt 2008).

2. Translation as the fifth skill

According to Owen (2002: 2) “The use of translation, as a moment’s reflection will confirm, has been a fundamental part of language teaching since the very beginning. Indeed, it must be the oldest language-teaching tool of all.” Nevertheless, the Communicative Approach has rejected translation altogether because it was seen as an impediment to the maximum exposure to L2 advocated by the method, complicating the learning process by bringing transference errors in language production. Generally, translation was overidentified with the Grammar Translation Method and as a result was apprehended as text-bound, uncommunicative, limited to only two skills out of four, non-interactive and remote from learners’ real needs (Bowen b, Carreres 2006, Owen 2002).

A new, different perspective on translation has been proposed in recent times by a number of authors such as Alan Duff, Angeles Carreres or Zenon Weigt. According to Carreres translation can be taught in a way that resembles the real life activity of translating. Then it makes use of the four basic language skills and it yields benefits in L2 acquisition. He claims that “The problem was not translation as such, but a teaching methodology that abstracted language from its communicative function. Indeed, translation itself as it takes place in the real world is intrinsically and inextricably linked to a communicative purpose. (...) there is no reason why translation should be restricted to literary passages and it certainly can be taught in more stimulating ways than has traditionally been the case” (Carreres 2006: 5).

It seems to me that alongside changes in academic stance, the status of translation has been enhanced by the reality of contemporary life. With the development of new communication technologies (especially the Internet) and changes in world tourism (travelling made easier as never before) and the political situation (the European Union, migration, globalization), today’s language learners have become members of a multinational community in which they have to be able to function as translators and/or interpreters. The growth of globalization of business has made it vital for people from different cultural backgrounds to work together. That is why cross-cultural communication competence and cultural sensitivity are highly demanded in today’s marketplace. Since the ability to translate is fundamental to both, it is needed by language learners who work as leaders, mediators or team members in international companies. Language learners also travel abroad as tourists, receive foreign visitors, and live in multiethnic cities around the world. Translation takes place in all these situations, being communicative and interactive and making use of all four skills, and Duff’s oft-quoted comment is still applicable in ELT: “translation happens everywhere, all the time, so why not in the classroom?” (Duff 1989: 6).

Duff (1989) and Petrocchi (2006) draw a clear line between translation teaching and language teaching by means of translation. Teaching translation on a non-vocational level is different from training professional translators. The

point is that translation can be a useful tool and an effective method of learning a language. Duff explicitly uses translation as a tool to teach language. In his book (1989) he gives 5 reasons for using translation in the classroom. Firstly, he says that we all have a mother tongue which shapes our way of thinking and our use of the foreign language to some extent. We cannot ignore it. It is translation which helps students to understand better the influence of the one language on the other, to correct errors of habit, like the misuse of particular words or structures, and to explore the strengths and weaknesses of both languages. Secondly, he states that “translation is a natural and necessary activity. More so, indeed, than many of the fashionable activities invented for language learners” (Duff 1989: 6–7). Thirdly, he describes language competence as a two-way system. Students need to be able to communicate both ways: into and from the foreign language. Translation is a perfect means for practising this vital skill. Fourthly, the proper material for translation is authentic and wide-ranging, including both speech and writing so that the learner is brought into contact with the whole language, not just the parts isolated by textbooks. And finally, as a language learning activity, translation has a lot of merits: it invites speculation and discussion when done in pairs or groups; develops three qualities essential to all language learning: accuracy, clarity and flexibility; and can be used to work through particular difficult structures in L2 using the mother tongue.

Other authors only add to Duff’s list of merits of translation activities in the EFL classroom. The most obvious benefit is that translation can help learners become aware of and reflect on similarities and differences between L1 and L2 (idiosyncracies, registers, collocations, compounds, cultural connotations, etc). Translation teaches students that there is not always a one-to-one correspondence between items in the two cultures/languages and that ways of thinking and expression are influenced (or even constrained) by culture (Gabrielatos 1998: 24). Translation can also play a role in the development of communicative abilities since speakers are often engaged in the work of sharing and negotiating meaning depending on the interpretative community and context. Thus, through translation activities, teachers can promote interaction among learners (Koppe and Kremer 2007:2). Finally, translation can be extremely creative: it is not only the translation of words from one language to another but the translation of ideas, concepts and images. It is an activity which involves transformation and creation (Bowen b).

A truly eye-opening argument, however, is that translation is a skill in its own right and, as has been argued above, a skill quite indispensable to learners of English in the present-day world (Carreres 2006, Swift 2006, Weigt 2008). Having a knowledge of two languages does not mean being automatically able to translate from one to another. As Weigt (2008) states we have to look upon translation as the 5th skill, which should be taught and practised in the classroom alongside reading, writing, speaking and listening. Since day-to-day life outside the classroom requires from our students the ability to translate, teachers should respond to this newly-developed need. We can do this by providing translation

activities in the EFL classroom, allowing the use of both mono- and bilingual dictionaries and respecting our students' demands to know the L1 equivalents of the L2 words/phrases/chunks if they feel they need them.

3. Chosen translation activities for the EFL classroom

Alan Duff's *Translation* (1989) is a recommendable resource book for any teacher interested in the issue. It consists of 157 pages of ready-made tasks and activities for the classroom, each suited to a specific purpose and containing material for 30–45-minute work with students at intermediate level and above.

The section below is a compilation of 22 translation activities proposed in different articles and papers by other ELT professionals, presented here in a form of a table. The description of activities and their aim (if stated) are fully quoted from the original sources in order to voice the actual reasoning of the author(s).

1.

Activity	Conversation Starters Using mother tongue newspapers for conversation practice. Choose or get students to choose an article from today's newspaper and explain what it is about in English. 15-minute activity, pre-intermediate +
Aim	Depending on the difficulty of the text this may generate vocabulary work as students work on communicating key points of the text to the teacher. This is similar to (but usually more effective than) just using pictures. The L1 text, like the picture is a fast way of stimulating ideas for conversation.
Source	Clanfield and Foord 2000

2.

Activity	Dubbing Show students a clip of a popular mother tongue TV programme (e.g. a soap) and tell them they have been commissioned to dub it into English for the BBC. With larger classes get students to work in teams. The best version gets the contract! Students can work on translating the script and taking on the roles of the actors and literally dubbing with TV sound off. 15-minute activity, intermediate +
Source	Clanfield and Foord 2000

3.

Activity	False Friends Wordsearch/Crossword Puzzle Prepare a series of sentences with a false friend in them. Write the sentence in English. Prepare a crossword puzzle with the correct words in English. Give the puzzle to the students and let them figure it out. 15-minute activity, intermediate +
Source	Clanfield and Foord 2000

4.

Activity	Shadow And Doubt Have students rehearse a communicative activity (shadow) in their mother tongue before attempting it in English and then afterwards compare. This can be a very effective way of challenging Advanced learners, as it helps to raise specific awareness of the difference between their ability to express themselves in English and in the mother tongue (doubt). 15-minute activity, all levels
Source	Clanfield and Foord 2000

5.

Activity	Sight Translation Prepare a series of interesting quotations (for example, 10) on a piece of paper. Show them to the students one by one (using an overhead projector would work nicely, otherwise write them on the board or prepare a piece of paper that students look at little by little). Give the students 30 seconds to read it, then take it away. They must each individually write what they understood but in their own language. Compare translations afterwards. <i>Variation:</i> Take quotes from the news and ask them to imagine who said it. 10-minute activity, intermediate +
Source	Clanfield and Foord 2000

6.

Activity	Reverse Translations Group A are given a short text in their mother tongue to translate into English. Group B a similar length of text in English to translate into their mother tongue. Groups then give their translations to each other to be translated back into the original. Finally groups compare the originals with the translated version. <i>Variation:</i> Correcting translations. Prepare some literal and inaccurate translations for your students to correct. Ready-made examples can also be found in your local tourist office! 10-minute activity, intermediate +
Source	Clanfield and Foord 2000

7.

Activity	Interpreters This can be adapted to any oral pairwork situation. It works best with interviews. Students work in groups of three (minimum). One person is the interviewer, and speaks only in English. The interviewee speaks only in L1. The interpreter works as a go-between, translating the interviewer's questions into L1 and the interviewee's answers back into English. <i>Variation:</i> Arrange a press conference, with several interviewers. The interviewee plays the role of a famous film star, politician etc. Just like on TV! Teenagers especially like this activity and recognise the scenario from TV interviews with pop stars and sports personalities. 10-minute activity, all levels
Source	Clanfield and Foord 2000

8.

Activity	Restaurant Roleplay Use a mother tongue menu so that natives have to explain the dishes to English-speaking guests. This is, after all, a more likely scenario than the “Olde Englishe Restaurante” favoured by coursebooks. 10-minute activity, all levels
Source	Clanfield and Foord 2000

9.

Activity	Translating Pop Songs Students translate the lyrics (or small sections of the lyrics) of their favourite songs into their mother tongue. Teenage magazines sometimes include songs with mother tongue translations, so you can use these to do it the other way round as well. 10-minute activity, intermediate +
Source	Clanfield and Foord 2000

10.

Activity	Broken Telephone/Telegram Devise a sentence that might cause translation problems into your students' L1. Whisper it to the first student in English. The first student translates it into L1 and whispers it to the second student, who translates it back into English and whispers it to the third. Go round the class in the same way. At the end, compare the final English version with the original. <i>Variation:</i> Do the same exercise, but in writing. 5-minute activity, all levels
Source	Clanfield and Foord 2000

11.

Activity	Funny Names Translate the following literally into the students' L1. So, for example George Bush becomes <i>Jorge Arbusto</i> in Spanish and <i>Georges Buisson</i> in French. George Bush, Johnny Walker, Wall St., Nicholas Cage, Johnson & Johnson, Louis Armstrong, The Doors, Johnny Cash, Bond, James Bond, Sting, Seven Up, Playboy magazine Tell the students they are going to have a dictation of names of famous people, things and places. They will hear these names in their own language, but must write down what they are in English (in other words, they must get the names right). Give the dictation. How many names could the students get? 5-minute activity, all levels
Source	Clanfield and Foord 2000; Najduchowski 2008

12.

Activity	Code Switching This means using more than one language in an utterance. ("I'll have a <i>café con leche</i> "). Bilingual kids do this all the time so why shouldn't learners? On occasion, encourage learners to use mother tongue words or phrases in a communication activity to maintain fluency and build confidence. A listener can note down mother tongue use for later work if you want, but that's not necessarily the point. 5-minute activity, all levels
Source	Clanfield and Foord 2000

13.

Activity	Awareness-raising activities e.g. a questionnaire in English on the use of L1 in the classroom
Aim	This activity opens up the debate concerning the use of L1 and so may help deal with some of the students' scepticism
Source	Prodromou 2002

14.

Activity	Contrasting L1 and L2 Useful areas for study in this way are collocations, proverbs and idioms.
Aim	Comparing verb-noun collocations across the two languages helps students understand how L1 interference can often give them problems. Comparing proverbs gives an insight into cultural as well as linguistic differences.
Source	Prodromou 2002

15.

Activity	Research in L1, Presentation in L2 For example, following textbook work on famous English writers, students research famous people from their country (using L1 and L2) and make a presentation in a later class, in L2. An alternative is a local history project, in which grandparents are interviewed in the L1, and a report is made in L2.
Aim	In these examples, the foreign language is a medium through which the students explore their own culture, using the mother-tongue as a bridge towards English. The English language can help you learn things about your own community.
Source	Prodromou 2002

16.

Activity	Bilingual Lecture Note taking: the students are translating directly what they've heard in L2, and denoting the gist in L1
Aim	A good way to teach and test comprehension, especially of the main ideas within the text
Source	Kasmer 1999

17.

Activity	Text in L2, discussion in L1 Students can demonstrate receptive competence by discussing their understanding of a text in their L1. After reading or listening, I ask them to tell me what they understood (based on the pre-set task) in the L1. Once I'm sure they're on the right lines, I ask them to repeat what they said in English. In this way they don't have to think about the answers themselves and about how to formulate them in English at the same time. I use this frequently with beginners' classes
Aim	To check students' receptive competence
Source	Swift 2006

18.

Activity	Lost in the translation First form a circle of up to 10 seated students. All students will receive a number from 1 to 10. Each even numbered student will receive a different English sentence written across the top of a piece of paper given to him or her. Odd numbered students will each receive one of the same English sentences translated into a native language sentence, also written on the top of a piece of paper. Students then proceed to translate the main idea of the sentence and write their translation below the original sentence. Students then fold the paper over concealing the original sentence, only showing their translated version of the sentence. Students will then each pass their papers in a clockwise fashion, again repeating the same process of folding to conceal the sentence that a student has read to write his translated sentence. Continue until a piece of paper has completed the circle or until the teacher decides to stop the activity (based on time or other factors). Now students examine what meaning has been lost in the translation of the sentences.
Aim	This helps students to not only improve their vocabulary base, so necessary for accessing meaning, but it also allows students to participate in a consciousness-raising activity concerning grammatical and contextual structures in their own native language and the L2, English. As an expansion activity, students may try to figure out how some of the sentences could be used in a dialogue. Examining which ones would fit, both contextually and meaningfully, will help students to recognize subtle structural differences in sentences related to wording and usage of idiomatic phrases. Then students could act out some of the dialogues constructed in English with suitable translation written down through group work. This will allow students to gain useful production practice, necessary to improve their speaking skills.
Source	Kasmer 1999

19.

Activity	Bilingual dialogues The technique employs pairing students off. One receives a native language version of a dialogue, the other an English version of the same dialogue. Then both students attempt to translate the dialogue. Later, the two students will compare results and act out the English dialogue. Depending on student levels, the discussion about the translated dialogues may be held in the students' native language or in English.
Aim	The activity serves as a consciousness raiser in comparing a student's L1 with his or her L2. Students will generally be able to access their L1 and use it to learn new vocabulary by translating. It is also useful for pointing up built-in redundancies in language, whereby there are numerous ways to express the same meaning. Finally, the acting out of the English dialogue offers the students production practice that is necessary for improving their speaking skills.
Source	Kasmer 1999

20.

Activity	Role-plays with native language brainstorming This is a technique where a set of English discussion phrases are usually pretaught and practiced. Students now break into brainstorming groups to develop strategies for their later discussion with an opposing group. The students for their brainstorming may use L1. Afterwards, students seeking additional appropriate English vocabulary and sentences for the discussion may ask the teacher for help. Students should consult bilingual dictionaries first, attempting to formulate expressions themselves. The teacher should point out some distinctions in meaning or formality for some words to be used in the discussion. Students, depending on their level of familiarity with the topic, may also be given a list of possible strategies and/or positions that they may use in later discussion sessions. Finally, the students prepare for the discussion practising the English expressions the teacher has given them before getting to the discussion itself. The teacher should follow with a critique of the discussion. This might include: presentation sequencing, word usage, grammar errors, body language, etc. Now may be included a further discussion of cultural differences related to the subject discussed or the situation and how it would differ in the L1.
Aim	Students benefit from this activity in a number of ways. First, they improve their ability to formulate a strategy. Secondly, they work on their dictionary usage skills with the teacher introducing different levels of appropriate language. Thirdly, students can gain useful vocabulary and phrases within a contextual framework with examples provided by the teacher and other classmates. Fourthly, students gain needed production practice for improving their speaking in a conversational format. Lastly, students will be introduced to L1 and L2 cultural differences by the teacher's critique of their discussion concerning presentation, word usage, etc. and any follow up discussion.
Source	Kasmer 1999

21.

Activity	Writing CV in English
Aim	By preparing a CV or a cover letter in English, students realize that translating is not only a job, but something that involves their lives, their everyday experience and is not a mechanical action. When translating a CV they must keep cultural differences, as well as differences in educational systems and job titles in mind. They realize that a degree or a job position cannot be simply translated. In this case, apart from stating the name in their language, I suggest that they should "explain" it in detail. Students are directed and encouraged at the same time to search on the Internet: this represents not only an exercise in localization but also in the use of the web in English, thus learning terminology and practicing the English language.
Source	Petrocchi 2006

22.

Activity	L1 problem session This is a period of time that is regularly scheduled for students to discuss, in their own language, any questions they have about lessons and vocabulary. It can be 10 minutes at the end of class or set on a weekly or monthly basis as needed.
Aim	Since your students will know in advance, they will really have time to think about any problem areas they may be having. Motivation increases as well. When your students know that they will have the chance to discuss something in L1 in the future, it is easier for them to actually try during activities in English. Most students will be relieved and have a better attitude if you will allow a time and place for L1, rather than saying that there is no place for their mother tongue in the classroom.
Source	International Teacher Training Organisation

Conclusions

The mother tongue is one of the many skills that our students possess and one of the many tools that we, teachers, have at our disposal. It is important to be aware not only of the limitations of L1 use but also of its benefits. Teachers should not be afraid to make their own decisions to use L1 in class as suits their requirements and their students' needs.

One important domain in language teaching where the use of L1 is inevitable and undoubtedly necessary is translation. Any translation practice involves conscious ways of learning and producing language. Teachers can use translation activities in the EFL classroom to raise language awareness, promote language learning, develop students' autonomy and teaching strategies of different types, as well as provide invaluable practice of this skill, which is so vital to learners in the modern global society.

And finally, any critically reflective teacher will try to be eclectic, bearing in mind that, just as there is no one learning style among our students, so no one

method in language teaching is perfect. Methods, approaches, training-course guidelines and techniques are not fixed dogma. Teachers should have the freedom to explore the many and various aspects of their role in the L2 classroom. After all, as rightly expressed by Parker J. Palmer in *The Courage to Teach: Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher's Life* (1998: 10):

Good teaching cannot be reduced to technique; good teaching comes from the identity and integrity of the teacher.

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